

COMMENDING OUTSTANDING EFFORTS OF ARMED FORCES AND EMPLOYEES OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND USAID IN RESPONSE TO EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI OF DECEMBER 26, 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2005

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 120, commending the outstanding efforts of our military and civilian personnel who responded to the humanitarian crisis engendered by the earthquake and tsunami of December 26, 2004. I commend my colleagues, Mr. BLUMENAUER and Mr. LEACH, for submitting this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I traveled to Southeast Asia in January to help assess the damage caused by the tsunami. I saw firsthand the overwhelming scale of the human tragedy that killed over 250,000 people. Without the heroic efforts of the U.S. Armed Forces personnel and the civilian employees of the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development, the death toll would have been far worse.

These men and women worked tirelessly to help provide necessities, like drinking water, food, and medical supplies, to survivors of the tragedy. In addition, many worked to coordinate the relief efforts of donors, relief organizations, aid agencies, and governments. The civilian employees worked to identify and assist U.S. citizens who were affected by the tsunami.

Because of the courageous efforts of these Americans, I have no doubt that many lives were saved. This selfless giving in a time of crisis was beyond the call of duty. Their efforts deserve great recognition and I am proud to support this resolution commending them.

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2005

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the 184th anniversary of Greece's declaration of independence from the Ottoman Empire. Against impossible odds, the Greeks defeated one of the most powerful empires in history and gained their independence.

In March 1821, after 400 years of Ottoman rule, Bishop Germanos of Patras raised the traditional Greek flag at the monastery of Agia Lavras, inciting his countrymen to rise against the Ottoman army. The Bishop timed this act of revolution to coincide with the Greek Orthodox holiday celebrating the archangel Gabriel's announcement that the Virgin Mary was pregnant with the divine child. Bishop Germanos's message to his people was clear: a new spirit was about to be born in Greece.

Greek Independence Day is an appropriate time to reflect upon the strong ties between Greece and the United States. Indeed, when the Greeks of 1821 fought for independence from the Ottoman Empire, they drew inspira-

tion from the ideals and institutions of the fledgling United States. During their War of Independence, the Greeks also received encouragement from many Americans, including Presidents James Madison and James Monroe and Representatives Daniel Webster and Henry Clay, each of whom gave memorable speeches in Congress in support of the Greek revolutionaries. Just as our defeat of the British army was remarkable, so too was the Greek triumph over the Ottoman Army, a momentous achievement in world history.

As many of my colleagues know, New York City is home to the largest Hellenic population outside of Greece and Cyprus. Western Queens, which I have the honor of representing, is often called Little Athens because of the large Hellenic population in that neighborhood.

New Yorkers celebrate Greek Independence Day with a parade on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan, along with a great many cultural events and private gatherings. These events, hosted by the Federation of Hellenic Societies and other Hellenic and Philhellenic organizations and friends, remind us of the Hellenic-American community's many contributions to our nation's history and culture.

On April 10, the President of the Federation of Hellenic Societies, Nikos Diamontidis, along with the organization's officers and board members, will join Parade Committee Chairman Dinos Rallis, Co-Chairmen Tasos Manesis and Philip Christopher and Co-Chairwoman Georgia Kaloidis in reminding New Yorkers of the glory of Greece, the joy of the Olympics and the hope of freedom and human rights for all. The Grand Marshals of this year's parade are my distinguished colleague, Senator PAUL SARBANES, his wife, Christine, Anthony Diamataris, the Editor and Publisher of the National Herald and his wife, Litsa. Adding to the day's ethnic pride will be parade emcees Nick Gregory, Anthoula Katsimatides and Petros Fourniotis.

In 2004, the Athens Olympics united the world. Today, while New Yorkers pay tribute to Greece's accomplishments, we also seek to add our hometown to the list of great Olympic host cities. It is my hope that one of Greece's most enduring contributions to world history will finally come to New York City in 2012.

As the founder and co-Chairperson of the Hellenic Caucus in Congress, I ask the nation to join me in celebrating Greece's independence. Additionally, it is my sincere pleasure to pay tribute to New York's Hellenic-American community for its many contributions to our city and nation.

"Zeto E Eleftheria!" (Long Live Freedom!)

IN CELEBRATION OF GROUP A BOYS' BASKETBALL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. ROBERT C. SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 6, 2005

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great pride to call attention to a group of young students from Surry County, Virginia, who have distinguished themselves, their school, their community, and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Surry High School Cougars boys' basketball team had a remarkable season and I

believe the Cougars deserve formal recognition for their accomplishments. On March 12, 2005, the Cougars won their first Group A Boys' Basketball State Championship at the Virginia Commonwealth University Siegel Center in Richmond. Surry completed its 2005 season with a truly impressive record of 26-4.

The Cougars have dedicated this year's championship run to their Head Coach, Joe Ellis. Mr. Ellis was diagnosed with colon and stomach cancer twenty months ago. Despite his diagnosis and subsequent chemotherapy treatments, Mr. Ellis has continued to coach the Cougars, missing only one game during their championship season. His dedication and commitment to the team have given his players a model of how to face adversity both on the basketball court and in life.

Along with the State Championship, the Cougars won this year's Tri-Rivers District Tournament and the Region A Tournament. Coach Ellis was awarded Coach of the Year by the Virginia High School Coaches Association. Junior center Edward Barham was also honored as Player of the Year.

I want to extend my enthusiastic congratulations for a job well done to Coach Ellis and the Surry High School Cougars—the 2005 Group A Virginia High School League Boys' Basketball State Champions.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM DAVIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 6, 2005

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on roll-call No. 90, had I been present, I would have voted "no".

HONORING DR. CONSTANTINE P. KIAMOS AND STEINMETZ ACADEMIC CENTRE

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 6, 2005

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of one of Chicago's great educators, Dr. Constantine P. Kiamos, former Principal of the Steinmetz Academic Centre.

Steinmetz Academic Centre stands in the heart of Chicago's Belmont-Cragin neighborhood, and has served the people of this community for over ninety years. Dr. Kiamos retired from Steinmetz last year after two decades of distinguished leadership, and was recently honored at a school event.

During his tenure, Steinmetz underwent many changes, including a major increase in enrollment. Through all of the changes, Steinmetz maintained its commitment to providing students with a high caliber education.

Dr. Kiamos has always believed in the importance of public education. Before he was the principal of Steinmetz Academic Centre, he served as Principal of Lovett School; Assistant Principal at Carpenter School and was a teacher at Medill Elementary.

Steinmetz's mission is to provide equal access to education for all students in an environment that is intellectually, physically and